

thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation



Photo: Lindsay Browning

Throughline Collective Offers Collapse/Intersect

by Jonathan Stein

Lisa Bardarson and Jonathan Stein have a conversation around last weekend's diverse work presented by the Throughline Collective.

LB: The collaborative dance, *Let's Keep in Touch* by Colleen Hooper and Joelle Worm, suggested that this piece was created by all means of communication and I believed it.

JS: Yes and I wondered if their use of video and technology to stay connected might have actually enhanced the separation between their two cities rather than bridging it as intended?

LB: That's an interesting point, Jonathan.

JS: I liked the arc of this piece, each dancing solos on stage while connecting to the other's studio located in either Milwaukee or Philadelphia.

LB: I certainly felt their desire to connect. I found their reunion gratifying in the final phrase.

JS: That reunion of both dancers on stage resolved the poignancy of their two-city separation through the buoyancy of their united energy.

LB: Next on the program was *what we do*, a video conceived, directed and edited by Barbara Tait in collaboration with Hooper and twelve young performers. I found this work charmingly rough.

JS: It struck me as both an homage to the social commitment of Tait and Hooper's shared vision and to the talent and exuberance of these young, West Philadelphia performers.

LB: I really liked how the video featured these kids experimenting with movement both inter-generationally and amongst themselves.

JS: And I found the loving respect of the video's young subjects quite touching.

JS: Julie Johnson's deadpan, sly irony kept me amused in her solo, *Translation Two-Step*, an excerpt of *The Awkward Suite*.

LB: I loved the development from simple steps into a charismatic, flapper-esque and jivey dance. It was fun to watch.

JS: I completely agree. The wooden, instructive dance narration by Joe Johnson was spiced up by her discordant gestures such as bent, right-angled elbows. Even with these sharp moves, the dance flowed with rhythmic sensibility.

LB: In Katherine Kiefer Stark's dance *Taking Up Space* I was captivated by the entrance of the five dancers (Amy Lynne Barr, Leanne Grieger, Hooper, Megan Wilson Stern and Kelly Turner). Clad in simple jumpsuits they burst onto the stage like red Ninjas.

JS: I enjoyed their spirited inversions, rolls and runs that alternated with their coming together en masse: not unlike a rugby scrum.

LB: Towards the end of the piece some of the dancers moved into the audience space during a duet that was taking place on stage. I found this distracting.

JS: Yes, it interrupted the flow. As her program note explained, Stark may have as a youngster been instructed to confine herself to a genteel, respectful kinesphere but this work definitely exploded that legacy.

LB: This was a fun way to review Jonathan. Thanks for an interesting afternoon of dance viewing, talking and writing.

Collapse/Intersect presented by the Throughline Collective at the Performance Garage, Sept. 13-15, www.fringearts.com

By Jonathan Stein

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